



**FROM THE DESK OF**

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**U.S. RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD**

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**RRB Strategic Plan**

The Government Performance and Results Act requires Federal agencies to submit strategic plans to Congress and the Office of Management and Budget. The strategic plan must outline the agency's mission and its general goals and objectives for a six-year period, as well as define how it will meet those goals and objectives. The law also requires that these strategic plans be updated every three years. The Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) submitted its "Strategic Plan" for the years 2000-2005 to the Congress and the Office of Management and Budget in September 2000. The previous Strategic Plan for the years 1997-2002 was submitted in September 1997.

The following questions and answers provide information on the RRB's Strategic Plan for the years 2000-2005 under the Government Performance and Results Act.

**1. What are the purposes of the Government Performance and Results Act?**

In summary, the purposes of this Act are to improve the confidence of the American people in the Federal Government by holding agencies accountable for achieving program results; improve Federal program effectiveness and public accountability by focusing on results, service quality and customer satisfaction; enable Congress to more accurately evaluate an agency's performance by providing more objective information on the objectives and costs of Federal programs; and improve the internal management of the Federal Government.

To achieve these purposes, the Act requires that agencies set program goals and prepare plans for meeting those goals. The Act provides a framework whereby an agency's performance will be measured against the goals it has set and also requires each agency to publicly report on the progress it has made.

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## **2. What are the goals and objectives of the RRB's Strategic Plan?**

The RRB has three strategic goals; and for each goal several strategic objectives have been established to enable the agency to focus on achieving that goal.

### **The first strategic goal is to provide excellent customer service.**

To satisfy our customers' expectation for quality service, both in terms of service delivery options and levels and manner of performance, the RRB has established the following six strategic objectives that focus on the specifics of achieving this goal.

- Pay benefits accurately.
- Pay benefits timely.
- Provide relevant, timely and accurate information which is easy to understand.
- Provide a range of choices in service delivery methods.
- Ensure an efficient and effective reporting system for railroad employers.
- Deliver service at the point-of-contact ("one and done"). Through reductions in both the amount of work passed from one employee to another and in the layers of review involved in a transaction, customers should be able to complete most business with the RRB in a single contact.

### **The second strategic goal is to safeguard the RRB's trust funds through prudent stewardship.**

Committed to fulfilling its fiduciary responsibilities to the rail community, the RRB has established the following seven objectives that direct its focus on this goal.

- Ensure the integrity of benefit programs through comprehensive and integrated monitoring and prevention programs.
- Ensure efficient operations through effective management control and quality assurance programs.
- Ensure that trust fund assets are projected, collected, recorded, and invested appropriately through an effective and efficient trust fund management program.
- Align resources using a performance approach based on contribution to mission.

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- Use outside sources and partnerships, when appropriate, to accomplish the agency's mission.
- Ensure that the RRB consistently pays the lowest price for products and services commensurate with quality, service, delivery and reliability.
- Use, build and maintain a professional, productive, innovative and diverse workforce.

**The third strategic goal is to use technology and automation to foster fundamental changes that improve the way the RRB does business.**

The RRB established the following three strategic objectives that focus on how it intends to use information technology resources to make fundamental improvements in the way it achieves its mission.

- Develop a sound and integrated information technology architecture that will foster its long-term efforts to improve mission performance while operating with fewer resources.
- Design and implement information technology initiatives that fundamentally improve efficiency and effectiveness in achieving the agency's mission.
- Ensure effective and efficient management of information technology resources.

### **3. How did the RRB develop this Strategic Plan?**

This plan continues a cooperative and intensive effort on the part of the RRB's management and staff and reflects input from its customers and other stakeholders.

The RRB's primary stakeholders are, of course, the employees and employers of the rail industry. Because it is a Federal agency, stakeholders also include the White House, Members of Congress, and the Office of Management and Budget. Other Federal agencies also have a stake in the RRB's success, in particular the Social Security Administration with whom the RRB closely coordinates many programs. Last, but not least, are the RRB's own employees and their representatives, whose talent and dedication are crucial to the success of this strategic plan.

### **4. What steps does the RRB take to ensure achievement of the Strategic Plan's goals?**

In order to ensure achievement of strategic goals, the Government Performance and Results Act provides that each agency also develop an annual performance plan, which is submitted along with the agency's budget request for a fiscal year. The annual performance plans lay out specific goals and

objectives, along with performance indicators and specific measurable targets. After the fiscal year, each agency must also report on how well it met the plan's goals.

The RRB's first annual performance plan was released to the Office of Management and Budget and the Congress along with its Fiscal Year 1999 budget submission. The RRB submitted its first annual performance report, as required by the Government Performance and Results Act, in February 2000, five months after the close of fiscal year 1999. This report compared actual performance to goals and the results were encouraging. The RRB met or exceeded planned performance levels for 44 out of 54 reportable indicators. Of the remaining 10, it came very close to the planned levels for many of them. For example, the RRB planned to achieve 99.70% payment accuracy for initial railroad retirement payments, and achieved a payment accuracy rate of 99.68%. When compared to Fiscal Year 1998 results, the Fiscal Year 1999 performance was equal to, or better, in nearly every category.

The RRB is proud of its strategic plan and expects that the plan will guide the agency as it continues its long and distinguished tradition of excellence in service to its customers. The RRB has a proven track record of carrying out its plans and achieving results. The RRB believes that this strategic plan, along with the annual performance plans and sufficient budget resources, will help the agency to achieve the results its customers need and deserve.

The complete plan is available on the RRB's Web site at [www.rrb.gov](http://www.rrb.gov).

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